

# Liberation

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**LITTLE ROCK:** are troops the answer?

## In this Issue-

The editors asked a number of persons to comment on the implications of the use of **FEDERAL TROOPS** at **LITTLE ROCK**. We hope to cover other aspects of the struggle for integration in future issues.

**LILLIAN SMITH**, the novelist, lives in Clayton, Georgia. Her books include *Strange Fruit*, *Killers of the Dream*, and *Now is the Time*.

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**LAWRENCE LIPTON**, author of *Rainbow at Midnight* and several novels, is now producing poetry and jazz concerts at the Los Angeles Jazz Concert Hall.

**WALLACE HAMILTON**'s first soap opera appears in this issue.

## Liberation

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*A new thing with heavenly motion made by us  
flies in the sky, it is passing every hour  
signalling in our language. What a power  
of thought and skill has launched this marvellous  
man-made moon! And suddenly the gorgeous  
abyss lies open, as you spring a door,  
to enter and visit where no man before  
ever came.*

*It is a mysterious  
moment when one crosses a threshold  
and "Have I been invited?" is my doubt.  
Yes, for our wish and wonder from of old  
and how we patiently have figured out  
the laws of entry, warrant we have come  
into the great hall as a man comes home.*

PAUL GOODMAN

MAN, who has advanced so little beyond the stage of vegetable matter that he can maintain consciousness only during about half of his childhood and two thirds of his adult life, has nonetheless flung a new satellite into the heavens. Civilized man, who has not learned in thousands of years how to live on earth without killing his fellow men, has launched a sputnik which circles the globe from on high every ninety-six minutes. Man, who has not yet succeeded in carrying out Socrates' advice, *know thyself*, has begun to explore interplanetary space.

How many persons in the history of the human race have stood outside at night and gazed at the stars in the heavens and wondered what they really are, whether there is really anything or *anybody* there, and what it all means. There is something in the nature of man which is not satisfied with a full belly and a grey flannel suit, but which presses on, despite the generals and the politicians, for deeper meanings and harmonious relationships, both with his fellow

humans and with the surrounding universe.

It is a tragic commentary on the loss of perspective in American and Soviet life that man's first step into space has been interpreted almost exclusively as an episode in the military struggle of competing nation-states. A barrage of headlines and patriotic analyses helped submerge the first awe and wonder that must have been felt by countless individuals throughout the world.

The rush of frantic accusations, counteraccusations, and attempts at political face-saving revealed some attitudes indicative of the confused and sterile reaction of the professed defenders of the Judaeo-Christian heritage. Here are a few of them:

1. Whereas the United States formerly had to press madly for ever more catastrophic weapons of destruction in order to maintain its military superiority over the Russians, now it must press madly etc., in order to catch up. In both instances (and we feel sure in *whatever* situations could conceivably develop) we

are told that peace will be maintained only if we sacrifice more and more of our time, money, freedom, and decency to preparation for war. *Love your enemies.*

2. "We" could have gotten there first, but we weren't interested. The sputnik is really of no military value and our generals were not fooling around with such kid stuff. They have their collective eye squarely on intercontinental ballistic missiles which will be capable of wiping out the Russians in pushbutton warfare. *Do good to those who hate you.*

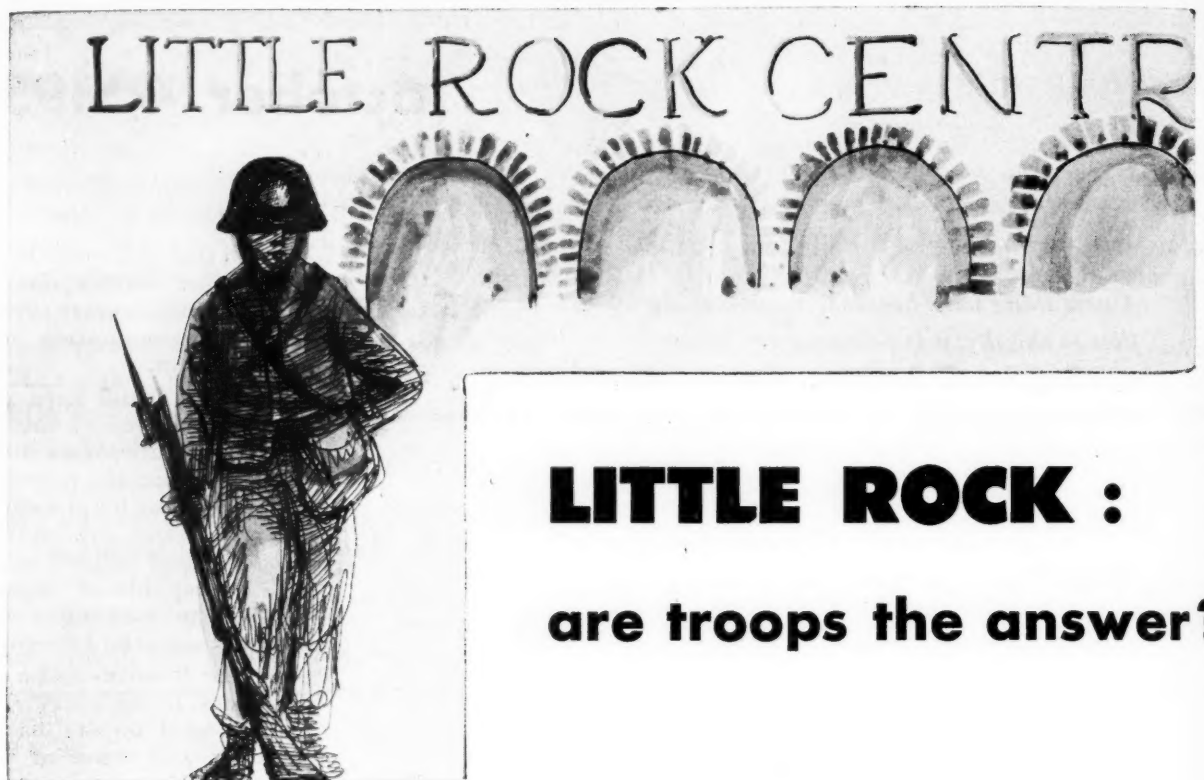
3. The Russians (who only yesterday were living every minute in a soulless total terror) have more enthusiasm and sense of public duty than Americans (front page story in New York *Herald Tribune*). *First take the beam out of your own eye and then you will be able to see more clearly to help your brother take the mote out of his eye.*

4. Americans need a shock like this every generation to alert them to their patriotic duty. What the attack on Pearl Harbor did for an earlier generation, the beep beep of Sputnik will do for America's youth today. (Arthur Krock, New York *Times*) *Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?*

5. As part of the "patriotic reassessment" stemming from the shock, Dr. Wernher Von Braun, former rocket expert for the Nazis, was given the Exceptional Civilian Service Award for his part in the creation of the army's Jupiter ballistic missile. In 1945, when Dr. Braun was just warming up in Germany for his present glories, the United States solemnly declared the Nazi missile "immoral, illegal," and "contrary to the laws of civilized warfare." *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*

One observation we did not see made is this: the successful launching by *anyone* of the first intercontinental ballistic missile with an atomic warhead attached will trigger a war that will send us all hurtling through space. *Father, forgive us, for we know not what we do.*





## LITTLE ROCK : are troops the answer?

### WORDS AND THE MOB LILLIAN SMITH

I SAW A MOB once, on the streets of India. I did not see the mob in Arkansas. But wherever it is, a mob on the loose has a monstrous quality. There is something about it that makes one think of a prehistoric animal pushing everything out of its way that it does not like.

To me, its most terrifying aspect is not its size or energy but the fact that it is always dominated by a holy idea; never by a leader. And that this holy idea always has to do with the body image; and always is accompanied by a taboo.

The body image, the taboos and anxieties swarming around it are primitive stuff—at home only on the savage layers of men's minds where reason rarely penetrates. Yet, before the mob forms, its individual members will respond to reason. That is why the silence of the good people, the thoughtful ones, is so tragic. Once the mob gets going, nothing in the world can restrain it except force—or the show of force.

The show of force is usually enough. The mob is not brave; actually very little is needed to disperse it. We forget, sometimes, that courage lies in the upper levels of men's minds—not down in the unconscious, primitive layers: there we find fear, anxiety, rage and desperation, never courage. Courage comes from men's good dreams, from their hopes, and their deep sense of survival.

Actually, it is a highly civilized quality. Those old movies of a stampede of buffalo on the western plains can remind us that the animals in that rushing herd were not filled with courage. They were filled with fear, anxiety, and sometimes destroyed themselves as they stampeded.

Because the mob never has courage, an effective show of force will usually quiet it down. But it must be *force*. Words do not count, after the mob once coalesces. It is different from panic. One man can stop a panic by a few quiet, courageously spoken words. But the mob is acting on a wordless level; therefore it cannot hear.

Some kind of force was necessary to restrain Little Rock's mob. When the city's police force proved ineffective because it did not behave like a force; when the Governor turned his face away; then the President had no alternative but to move our troops in. It is his sworn responsibility to protect American citizens and restore law and order when local and state police agencies have broken down.

It is a pity that it was necessary. And it would not have been, had the thoughtful people of state and city spoken out in time. For no mob ever gathers on the street until enlightened opinion has left it. No demagogue ever talked too much until the good people had talked too little. This silence created a moral vacuum



Naturally, it was filled—by troublemakers, delinquents, criminals, and the mentally confused.

Why don't the good people speak out? We must find out. The entire nation must look at this silence, must pull it this way, that, until the real reasons are found. Part of it comes from fear of local reprisals; part of it comes, I think—being a southerner myself—from the childhood training which taught us never to speak up against segregation. The taboo on speaking has always been stronger than the taboo on acting. But much of it comes from the simple stark fact that the thousands ready to speak have no place to say their words, except in whispers to each other. Public opinion is not formed that way.

This is the bottleneck now: There can be no easing

of our racial troubles until the thousands of white people in the South who oppose segregation have a chance to say so aloud. Here is where the North can help: See to it that the mass magazines are opened to white southern writers who want to speak out against segregation; see that the TV and radio networks are open to them. At present, there is tremendous pressure on these networks to keep the white southerner opposed to segregation from saying so over the air waves. The "line" of the White Citizens Councils, and many moderates, is this: *Let the Negroes speak; let the white northerner speak; but don't let any white southerner speak against segregation. For we are selling the entire country the idea that everybody in Dixie wants things just as they are.*

## The Invention of Responsibility

DAVID WIECK

WHAT WE MUST do first of all, is to extricate ourselves mentally from the *artificial* drama of which we have been witnesses. President Eisenhower has been criticized in the liberal press for his failure to act sooner, for his hesitation and postponement. As to the motivation of the President and his advisers, one must suspect a sympathy with the ancient racist patterns, conjoined with an ideology according to which the chief-of-State must represent the whole of the State (the Law) and never a partisan faction; no doubt the Eisenhower group would be most pleased if the nine students would eliminate the whole difficulty by returning to the schools which the nine judges condemned to death. But this very procrastination, this very believe-no-evil policy, has had a remarkable subsidiary effect, an effect we ignore at our own risk, because the effect is on our thinking. The drama of good and evil, of right and wrong, was, by these dilatory policies, brought to such a pitch that *everyone* must have experienced relief that at last the agents of governmental violence had come to smite down, by the aura of their presence, the mob athwart the road to so-long-deferred emancipation.

The "men of good will" could hardly be unaffected by this drama. The crime of racist oppression was among the first of which we became conscious; later, we despaired of seeing it abolished in our life-times; now the victory is in sight, and we are terribly impatient for it. I too am impatient, and affected by the drama of "When will Eisenhower act?" For I acknowledge that I did not see how, after the Little Rock situation had so far degenerated, after the mob had received the protection of the National Guard and, inferentially, the encouragement of the President, after the failure of any independent force to gather and manifest itself in Little

Rock—I could not see how, at this point, one could oppose the act of Federal violence against the mob. One branch of government was suppressing a mob incited by another branch of government; the soldiers were giving the adolescents the chance, within the school, to discover their way to each other. I care strongly about the outcome of the Little Rock struggle of Autumn '57, and it seemed to me that for the sake of this victory one had to tolerate what one would have given anything to avoid.

But it is obvious that analysis cannot stop here. The concrete possibilities in Little Rock on a certain date have their importance, but the crucial questions raised by this one instance are of a different, more embracing order, they put the Little Rock events in a different perspective. First of all, is the Little Rock pattern desirable, should it be repeated (as the NAACP seems to hope)? If one answers this negatively—as I shall—one faces the question of paramount importance: *are there ways to avoid this pattern? are there ways to promote the downfall of Southern racism without invoking or relying on the power of Federal violence?* When I answer these questions, I am obliged to retrace my steps, and admit that my emotional reaction to the events in Arkansas was wrong.

I. Can we accept it as a "solution," that Federal troops be stationed, in fact or in threat, before every school-building in the South, until the Southern "white" communities accept the new pattern of education?

Against this solution there are powerful objections implicit in pacifism and in the libertarian, anti-state philosophy which I hold. But perhaps these considerations will appear to be too abstract, or too sectarian. I prefer, therefore, to approach the problem differently,

by means of two questions which I believe will give conclusive answers.

The first, which I regard as the less important, is the strategic question: is it so certainly the case that the injunctions and the troops are going to open the route to the school-rooms of the South? Would it not be entirely in keeping with the past of the Eisenhower administration—which is the custodian of the troops and to a certain measure of the judiciary—to bargain with Southern racism, to yield the deepest South in exchange for states like Arkansas which the racists cannot expect to hold? This is very probably the strategy of the group for which the Governor of Arkansas acts, and it is not a stupid strategy. If the Federal government is, in an objective sense, a kind of ally to the struggle against racism, it is the most uncertain kind of ally: not from conviction but from the pressure of an immediate situation (especially as it bears on “prestige abroad”). We do not know that this government will not, if the Little Rock situation is repeated, announce at a certain point that its methods are a failure, and reach toward a new kind of peaceful co-existence with Southern racism.

I am not insisting that the Federal government *will* act in a duplicitous manner: it is not possible to know this. What is knowable, is that the government may swing this way or that way, depending on considerations extraneous to the issues involved. From this, the following conclusions: (1) There should be an intensive search for methods to advance the integration of the schools without the intervention of this ambiguous force (the government); (2) There should be emphasis on reliance upon the unambiguous forces, namely the Negroes and the Whites sympathetic to their cause, and opposition to the developing habit of reliance on government, of waiting for injunction and troops, of invoking the Federal agencies.

But considerations of strategy, though weighty, are not really the ultimate ones. We have to ask ourselves: What view do we take of the Southern “whites”? Do we regard them as wild animals who have to be put on a chain? Or how do we regard them? We are, I believe, in the presence of a critical time in the evolution of the South. The march of events (including of course the Supreme Court decision) has undermined the faith of Southern “whites” in their ancient ways; they feel that these are doomed (even the mobs have no confidence in their ultimate victory); they are becoming at last uneasy about the conflict between ancient customs and the Western ideals. But now they want to evade a full confrontation of the crisis in their minds and lives. The middle-of-the-road Southerner, as I read him in the newspapers, *wants* to be coerced into obedience. He wants to say, I am doing this because it is the law, not because it is right; I have not changed my mind, I bow

to force. If the technique of military enforcement succeeds, it will be because the desire for this escape from the existing moral dilemma has become more powerful than the desire to go into the streets for a losing cause. It seems to me crucial that these people be deprived, as much as possible, of this easy way out. Not for the sake of punishment—not in order to compel public acknowledgement of guilt. But so that they may transcend the character which the Southern style of life has imposed upon them.

I am concerned about these people, because I believe, as did the Supreme Court in fact, that the southern “whites” are also victims of their own ways: that the terrible sullenness and hatred that is the habitual mask of so many of them is as much a degradation of humanity, and as much attributable to the racist mores, as the masks of Southern “blacks:” in each case, personality has been the victim, and is maimed. And while I care very much that Negroes be freed from these obscene customs, I care also that the “whites” of the South attain the possibility of liberation from their own past, by a full confrontation of that obscenity.\*

From this analysis, it follows that reliance upon, support of, acceptance of, Federal violence to enforce the new pattern is not only dangerous, its effects are likely to be contrary to the aims which persons of liberal and radical social beliefs claim to share. Alternative forms of action are not only a desideratum, but the search for them is a necessity.

The direct action movement against racism finds itself, therefore, at a critical point. It is tempted with surrender of initiative and responsibility to a government which now represents itself as friendly; but it is exactly at this point that this movement most needs to affirm and strengthen its consciousness of its role and its latent power. In the light of this analysis, Little Rock must be regarded as a lost opportunity, rather than an exception to the pacifist or libertarian reliance on direct action.

II. Now, it is customary, when one subjects one line of action to criticism, to propose an alternative. I am not going to propose a specific alternative, if only because I am a “white” northerner, whose relationship to the case is emotional rather than personal, and who cannot expect to know what is the *exactly appropriate* action in the given circumstances; there is nothing that requires such constant inventiveness as a method of direct action. But within these limitations certain remarks are possible.

\* It will be seen that, from the viewpoint of this critique, the pacifist critique is not adequate. A “non-violent army,” in the Gandhian sense, if its coercion were successful, would not have a different effect than that of paratroopers with fixed bayonets. What should be averted, *in the degree it is possible*, is any reliance upon any form of coercion that will permit the people of the South to evade confronting the problem of living together as human beings.



# The Position of the N. A. A. C. P.

HENRY LEE MOON

It was thoughtful of the editors of *LIBERATION* to call attention to David Wieck's article before publication.

There is no reason to assert that: "The NAACP seems to hope . . . the Little Rock pattern (is) desirable" and should be repeated. We hope that it will never be necessary to call in troops. We hope that desegregation will proceed steadily and peacefully throughout the South. We believe that this is possible if there is a will to do it on the part of local authorities. However, we most certainly prefer the use of federal troops to uphold court orders rather than the use of state militia to prevent the enforcement of such orders.

Roy Wilkins, executive secretary of the NAACP, indicated this recently at the state convention of the North Carolina NAACP when he stated:

"While all Americans join President Eisenhower in his sadness at the use of troops anywhere, as between troops to obstruct the orders of our courts and troops to uphold these orders, there can be but one choice. The President has earned not only the thanks of Negro citizens—hounded by actual mobs and harassed on all sides by the mob spirit—but the thanks as well of millions who saw the fate of the American dream trembling in the balance.

"Those politicians who now scream at Federal troops in Little Rock were as silent as a tomb when Arkansas National Guardsmen carrying guns turned back school girls carrying books."

In response to your question as to how the NAACP would like to proceed in the integration struggle in the South, this also was stated by Mr. Wilkins in the same address:

"In the working out of any plan, approached in good faith, Southern white people will have the active and understanding cooperation of Negro citizens, as long as the principle of desegregation is the core of the plan.

"Immediately after the (Supreme court) decision of May 17, 1954, Dr. Channing H. Tobias, National Board Chairman of the NAACP, issued a statement . . . in which he said:

"It is important that calm reasonableness prevail, that the difficulties of adjustment be realized, and that, without any sacrifice of basic principles, the spirit of give and take characterize the discussions."

"This is the spirit of the NAACP and Negro citizens today. Three and one-half years after the decision we are still willing to meet and discuss with 'calm reasonableness' any good-faith plan of desegregation."

The Montgomery demonstration stands, it seems to me, as the prototype for action. Consider what it means: this action does not compel the non-Negro population to do anything against its will; it does nothing except state, by the most appropriate action, the unwillingness of these people to suffer the indignity they are asked to suffer. It confronts the "white" population with the facts: they are now required to *choose*, to choose whether to continue in their old ways, but no longer with any illusions that the Negroes "like it," and no longer with the possibility of ignoring what they are doing; or whether to take the positive step of acceptance. It is a method possessing beauty, dignity and efficaciousness. The problem would be, I should think, to look for analogies in the school situation.

The long-run effectiveness of such methods—assuming they are not turned into mere techniques for provoking Federal intervention—is predicated upon the belief that there is already occurring in the southern "white" community the shift of belief referred to earlier. I am aware that the degree to which it has occurred is debatable and a question of judgment. In Little Rock, at least, there are abundant signs that this shift has been considerable. The shame of Little Rock—really—was not that a thousand persons gathered from everywhere to surround a school-building, but that another thousand, or two, or five, who *might* have come to the school to demonstrate their disagreement with the mob, did not come. This was shameful. They read about it in the newspapers, and accepted no responsibility; they preferred the anonymity of the Center; they preferred the disgrace upon their city; they preferred to let the injunction and the troops settle it; they preferred to accept identification with a mob which no longer truly represented them. The question asks itself: How are they to be persuaded to accept responsibility? And the further question: If there are ways to induce them—or some few of them, for it would not take many—to accept this responsibility, is it not worth doing, even if it takes a little longer? (When I speak of what may take a little longer, I am not speaking of *inaction*; on the contrary.)

I repeat, I am not proposing a particular tactic—I do not believe I have a right to. But I will offer a concrete illustration of the type of alternative that I have in mind. Suppose, instead of trying to precipitate Federal intervention, and defense of the right of their children to go to the schools, the Negro parents kept their children *out of all schools* until the local community will take responsibility for itself, until the *local community*—not the National Guard, not the local police, but the weight of local opinion—will stand up to the mob and the politicians that foment mobs? Do we really believe that an action of this type would not have a profound effect?



## L. Alex Wilson is a MAN OF COURAGE



*Editor of the Tri-State Defender, Wilson was one of four reporters whose presence at Little Rock Central High School diverted the white mob on September 23, thus enabling the nine Negro children to enter for the first time, by a side door. He was brutally assaulted. The next day, President Eisenhower ordered federal troops into Little Rock. The editors of LIBERATION are glad to present Wilson's views on the conflict.*

The shame and disgrace now endured by law-abiding citizens of Little Rock is traceable to one ill-conceived or misguided act.

When Governor Orval Faubus on the fateful evening of September 2 ordered the Arkansas National Guard to Central High school to maintain the status quo, defying the edict of the United States Supreme Court desegregating the school, he set the stage for inevitable federal action.

Under the pretext of maintaining law and order, the politically ambitious farmer-governor created a historic struggle between a well-regarded state and the federal government over the integration issue.

There followed the infamy of nine highly intelligent, courageous students being denied entry into the school by the guardsmen; frantic rabble-rousing by segregationists supporting Governor Faubus' stand; then the conference between the governor and President Eisenhower.

It was quite obvious that when Faubus returned from the conference with the President to the governor's mansion in Little Rock, he was a confused man.

Although he stated a desire to uphold the law of the land on the one hand, he sought on the other to save face in the crisis by not alienating his segregationist supporters, then growing in numbers.

He ordered his National Guardsmen from Little Rock's Central High, but in so doing he deliberately fed the flames of defiance.

Knowing that the situation was then a grave one, Mayor Woodrow Wilson Mann nevertheless attempted to comply with the high court's order by providing protection for the nine students to enter the school.

Monday, September 23, the day that will live in the history of this country, brought sudden violence from a hate-filled mob of at least four hundred, and a reign of terror in Little Rock.

Meanwhile, when Governor Faubus learned of his handiwork he smugly commented: "I told you that would happen."

The attack on innocent persons near the school and in

other parts of the city prodded President Eisenhower out of his middle-of-the road policy. He had sworn to uphold the constitution of the United States as President. He could ill afford to permit a mob to flout the law of the land, thereby allowing the establishment of a dangerous precedent. With action typical of his famed maneuvering in World War II, he ordered the crack One Hundred and First Airborne Division to Central High School. His historic move and the efficiency of the One Hundred and First effected an uneasy peace, which has been welcomed by many of both races in the trouble beset city.

Millions of Americans did not realize that we have in this country an element of such savage nature as characterized the mob at Central High School on September 23. Its constituency has lived by bigoted and biased customs for years, hence lacks tolerance and understanding of the struggle by the Negro for first-class citizenship. The use of persuasion alone with hate-filled barbarians may be likened to sound against a deaf ear. However, they can understand one thing which is vitally necessary as a starting point: the mailed fist of the law. That is what the federal troops at the high school represent.

I envision further resistance to integration in the South, but the Federal government has established a principle which will be given thought by the die-hard segregationists. Some other states will do their utmost to prevent the onus which now disgraces a city and state which previously had a fair name in race relations in the eyes of the world.

It is not beyond the realm of possibility to assume that the decent law-abiding citizens of an area, though many may be opposed to integration, will choose to accept and actively support a reasonable program. There are some indications of that currently in Little Rock among spiritual and business leaders.

I firmly believe that the combination of justice and righteousness—the best of what is human with the highest of what is divine—will triumph.

## "You gotta be better than somebody"

PAUL GOODMAN



YOU SEEM TO ASK if the intervention of the Federal troops was "justified and wise" as if it could be different. But the case is that somebody publicly defied a court order and therefore the constituted authority compelled performance. This is apodictic; what is to discuss? Certainly the Governor was in defiance for, as had been shown elsewhere and as the sequel has shown in Little Rock, he could just as well have used his Guard to obey the order as to nullify it. The question then must be why the editors of *LIBERATION* do not adopt our patient—and resigned—libertarian attitude towards such goings-on: that there cannot be a right answer when the problem as a whole is wrongly posed; that in the wrong framework events wreak themselves according to the necessity imposed by the framework, which we are powerless to cope with directly.

There is place, to be sure, for sentimental reactions to the events, sentimental reactions but not emotional responses, for emotion urges to action. I can think of the following possibilities: an editor who feels vengeful will rejoice to see a blow delivered, for a change, on behalf of his side; an editor who is more sweetly spiteful will plump for the purity of pacifism and make everybody feel a little guiltier; I myself (I am not an editor), entrenched in a conceit of reason, am content to see a noisy boob get his come-uppance. A saintly person would simply go on grieving.

Let us leave both such ethical and lyrical considerations and try some analogies. Prejudice like that in the south is a matter for social psychiatry. Those people are crazy. Period. Any attempt at a social psychiatry raises ethical and political issues, but unless the psychiatric purpose is kept in the foreground everything gets

mixed up and you begin to treat hysterical and compulsive acts as though they were responsible choices. (I argued this in reviewing Penn Warren's book in last spring's *Dissent*.) The question now becomes, What is the therapeutic or anti-therapeutic effect of the Federal troops? If there is any therapeutic effect, does the cure entail other serious disadvantages? Now I don't know, and I am too ignorant in sociology to have a useful hunch. But as a psychologist and teacher and a man adventuring in the city, I think I have some experience of one persistent element in the situation, namely the hoodlums who jeer, throw the tomatoes, burn the effigies of straw, and can go further.

These fellows, a prey to inner conflicts that we need not specify, try to keep their suffering in abeyance by cultivating a reactive conceit of themselves as "strong" and daring. This image is socially shared, with obsessional conformity, and it requires continual proof by shared excessive behavior of a snotty, tough, and risky kind, always raising the ante. The shared guilt somewhat alleviates the quite different own guilt. But even so the reactive self-image doesn't hold up against the storms from below, especially if, as in the south today, stimulating incidents keep occurring in the environment. Instead of diminishing anxiety the hoodlum activity increases suffering by adding, now, real fears and worse projected challenges to the so-called masculinity. *However*—and this is the capital point for our present discussion—the whole dismal process can be summarily halted by a show of unchallengeable force from outside. If his bluff is called by force that everybody admits he cannot withstand, the hoodlum can suddenly rest quiet and stop trying to prove what he cannot prove, what a



big shot he is. But further, and this is the therapeutic point, by a remarkable mechanism of our doggy human nature, *his ego is in fact strengthened by identification with the force that has saved him from "himself"*. For the chief thing one observes (and I have no doubt it is observable in Little Rock) is that the unchallengeable force is *not* feared and *not* resented, but respected; it is respected and even loved because it is again, in a secure and protective form, his very own ideal. All of the pother and big threats come down to some rueful griping and petty spite; calm is restored.

We are here speaking of the *show* of force, as in Little Rock, not the use of force. The use of force produces fear, desperation, and rage; it can lead only to further repression or breakdown. But the show of force, in the types we are considering, does have a calming and possibly integrating influence. (I say "the types we are considering"; yet is it not a fair picture of the stability of the State in general?)

### Therapeutic Intervention

Good. Bracketing off this one element, and to the degree that this persistent element of the hoodlum is salient, a social physician might actually prescribe the intervention of troops not only in Little Rock but in every other community. It is advantageous to the hoodlum—not, to be sure, so advantageous as bringing forth the inner conflicts and dissolving the characteristic defense, but this kind of psychotherapy is simply not available on a mass scale. Further, what (still in brackets) would be the effect on integration? I don't know. But a possibility might be, might it not, that in the enforced but respected peace during which the negroes attend the schools, a new generation of hoodlums would spring up—it would spring up because nothing has been changed in the original conditions—which, however, would not make the negro the symbol for its inner troubles. That is, the "negro problem" would be alleviated. I am pressing this analysis both because I think it is true and to show that force is never a simple issue.

But now remove the brackets and bring back our hoodlums into all of society. At once we see that these young hoodlums quiescent before the show of force have become the type of U. S. Marines. And the system of keeping the peace by legal (and even rational) authority is a general school of the same tendency, although integrated to be sure.

What about the other people? Those of the community not so much in the grip of the racial insanity must likely regard the occupation by the troops with shame, a shame that they have brought upon themselves. I doubt that this group can be very resentful (for they consider the injured negroes as persons), and I do not think that their reaction will much disadvantage the

negroes in the long run. If this is a large group—I do not know—it can be relied on to hasten remedying the segregation and other injustices and getting rid of Faubus, for shame combined with reason is a powerful means of education.

But it is the middle group, between the hoodlums and the sane, that is hard to calculate. Let us define these as the conventionally law-abiding whose deep prejudices are wounded by the integration. Here we must expect strong resentment; but this cannot explode into social action because, whatever they feel in their blood, they know that they are unreasonable, and you cannot organize a rebellion against your better judgment. Psychologically such a situation can result in a disastrous apathy and resignation. To these people, the presence of the troops is not therapeutic, it gives neither assurance nor understanding nor acceptance of alienated images; rather it disheartens, discourages responsibility and initiative for the community, and it circumvents attempts to work the problem through. This group is sheepish to begin with; the troops will make them numb. Nevertheless, even here I do not see any particular disadvantage for the negroes as negroes in the long run.

"For the negroes as negroes." Naturally as people, undistinguished from the whites, they too will inherit the regimented and apathetic society. But it would be imprudent for a disfranchised group to be concerned over much with the state of society in the future when they will be enfranchised. And secondly, perhaps the entire southern society would be better off to get rid of the segregation at *whatever* cost, for *it cannot be overstressed that, psychologically speaking, the segregation is as disastrous to the whites as to the negroes.* (This has not been said enough and it might help many southerners to hear it said and proved.)

### The Weight of Decency

Thus, I have tried to review in my mind the effects of the show of force on various groups in a community where there is a powerful local prejudice but where the weight of "better judgment" is heavily on the other side. This "better judgment" is formed by reason, religious conscience (on the whole), and most importantly by the fact that there is no southern culture and technology, the south is culturally simply a part of the United States, and the country as a whole is rapidly increasingly integrating. The conclusion I seem to reach is that the troops are psychologically not catastrophic and even have certain advantages; as the Freudians would say, here the alliance of ego and super-ego is stable against the id. (At the same time one would expect many individual crack-ups.)

Now, all this is not ideal, it does not add up to a life worth living. The bother is that no attempt is made to



work through the underlying problem or to change character. You cannot talk to a segregationist southerner for two minutes—if you know how to get him angry—without finding that the issue is sexual through and through, akin to paranoid jealousy: mama is a whore, the sexual act is abominable, niggers have big peckers, and white boys are weak. Yet it is always the Faubuses who raise the sexual issue; it is never the editors of *LIBERATION*. But the attempt to deal with the problem of integration in isolation, to get justice for the out-group without invading the privacy of the in-group, without “complicating the issue”, is quite senseless; for the issue is prejudice, and then you *must* ask, What own impulses are repressed? what is being projected?

Or suppose we use the contrary method of analysis and address the character-defense, the white southern pride. Penn Warren’s little book isn’t much good but it

does tellingly report the characteristic attitude of “You gotta be better than somebody” or feel you are nothing at all. Surely this is a false pride and implies that they are warding off a self-contempt projected onto the blacks. But how, positively, to *be* something at all? when for most men there is little creative opportunity, little personal contact, little community, and when patriotism has degenerated to conceited paranoia. Of course this is not particularly a southern problem, but the combination of northern technology and sociology, Federal troops, and Madison Avenue culture does not help.

Finally, are not the negro leaders too exclusively motivated to insistence on rights in *abstracto*? This is an appropriate response to insult, but it is not very outgoing. Let us put it this way: is the NAACP not more concerned with integration than with education?

## STICKS AND STONES AND LITTLE ROCKS

FRANKLIN ZAHN

IN THE MIDDLE Thirties I voted against an incumbent gubernatorial candidate solely on the grounds that he had failed his oath of office by refusing to call out state troops to enforce a valid court order expelling C. I. O. sit-down strikers from automobile plants. The sheriff in the county where Flint, Michigan is located had decided that his own forces were inadequate to enforce the injunction and had asked for state support.

Governor Frank Murphy’s excuse was that he did not wish to jeopardize negotiations which he was then conducting daily at the state capitol between the United Automobile Workers and executives of several companies. His political opponents, of course, could point out that only a short time previously Herbert Hoover had lost the veteran vote by signing the order for Federal troops to eject bonus marchers from likewise illegally appropriated buildings in the District of Columbia. But, in any event, the big strike, lasting for many weeks and with up to a quarter of a million workers out at once, was settled without a single life lost—in sharp contrast to the ten deaths on a single day in a steel strike south of Chicago in the same year. Not only was the man who took laws lightly re-elected but later he was appointed by the President to the Supreme Court!

I have not recently made the mistake of voting against such an enlightened politician, having since lost that franchise in setting my own personal convictions above the law in World War II.

Liberals who believe in nonviolence must look upon

Federal troops in Little Rock as a mistaken method of working for integration. Psychologically, much racial prejudice in the South can be traced back to the effects of the humiliations of defeat and occupation by Union troops decades ago—a similar pattern to the present oppression of a weaker group by the Boer’s descendants in South Africa, and to the persecutions of Jews in Hitlerian Germany. The new “occupation” can only result in new resentments, and these in turn will be passed on to the already harassed Negroes.

What is obviously needed is some sort of educational program explaining the reasons for the Supreme Court’s 1954 decision. Very few Americans, North or South, know the reasons why “separate but equal” schools were outlawed. Totalitarian countries, supposedly resting on threat of force alone, actually seem far more concerned about “educating” their citizens; America seems to rely entirely on private agencies—at least in peacetime. When these fail, the law is endangered.

But even more important, civil rights must be accompanied by civil liberties, and individuals must have the right to object even to supposedly good laws. Not all segregationists are hypocritical senators who hide behind “states’ rights.” Not all ministers who use the Bible to support segregation can be declared insincere. However superstitious and unenlightened members of White Citizens Councils may be, they too have a right to affirm with Thoreau: “It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right.”



## Coercion in American life

WILLIAM HESSELTINE

WHATEVER MAY BE the facts in the Little Rock situation, they are not, and will not be, known for many a day. Obviously, as with most human happenings, the answers which the historians will eventually give will find that multiple causation and a mixture of motives entered the situation on both sides.

At the same time, finding a pathway through the hills and gullies of constitutional law and interpretation is a futile search. Long ago a confused observer remarked that the Constitution is what the judges say it is, and a humorist-philosopher added the wisecrack that the Supreme Court obviously followed the election returns. Constitutional interpretation changes with the times, and within less than half a century after Justice Holmes declared that "a constitution is not intended to embody a particular economic theory" and the "Fourteenth Amendment does not enact Mr. Herbert Spencer's Social Statics," the court was able to pronounce definitively that a particular school of psychological thought had the formal authority of law.

In the Little Rock case, both protagonists—using President Eisenhower and Governor Faubus as the embodiments of two antagonistic causes—have appealed to history, and both have affected to see parallels between the present situation and past events. The Governor has likened the "invasion" of Arkansas to the military occupation of the South during Reconstruction, while the President has cited numerous examples of the use of federal troops in previous efforts to maintain "law and order" and to carry out the mandates of the agencies of the federal government.

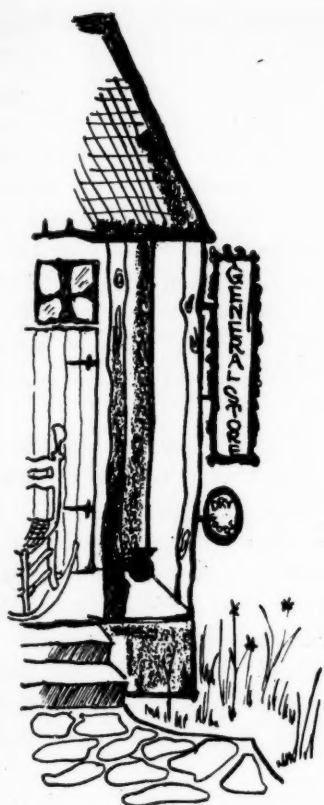
The appeal to history which the Governor and the President have made has, on each side, certain obvious defects. Each has cited the cases which suited his purpose. Neither has bothered to undertake an analysis of the incidents which he cites, or to understand the problems in any kind of historical perspective.

President Eisenhower is quite correct in pointing out that the national government has repeatedly used its

military forces to carry out the will of the national government. He has, however, seen fit to cite only a handful of the cases. President Washington did, indeed, call out the militia of the adjacent states to suppress the discontented farmers of Western Pennsylvania who had riotously driven out the collectors of an obnoxious tax on whiskey. But in addition, President Washington and his successors steadily and successfully used the standing army of the United States to regulate the conduct of western settlers and to mold the territories into conformance with the government's concepts of territorial development. President Jackson threatened to use troops to prevent South Carolina's nullifying two tariff acts—though he failed to bring the troops into use in Georgia when the state militia, defying the decision of the Supreme Court, despoiled Indians of their rights. President Pierce sent federal troops into the political turmoil of the Kansas Territory and maintained "law and order" in the region until after the election of 1856 was safely passed. President Lincoln called out troops to suppress insurrection in the seceded states of the South, used the force of the nation to coerce the states back into the union, and at the same time used military force to suppress criticism of the government in the Border states, to enforce a draft act in New York and other northern cities, to arrest and imprison citizens who expressed disapproval of governmental policies, and to control elections in northern states. President Grant not only maintained troops in the South during Reconstruction, where they forced compliance with the will of the victor in the Civil War, but sent troops into Chicago, over the protest of the governor of Illinois, at the time of the Great Chicago fire. Cleveland sent troops into Illinois to guard the trains at the time of the Pullman Strike; Wilson found reason to send the troops into Colorado to maintain "law and order" in a mining strike.

The precedents are there, and what they illustrate is

(Continued on page 19)



# NOT SO LONG AGO

*Autobiography: Part 4*

## THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

A. J. Muste

AT THE CLOSE of the preceding installment, I was telling of some of my experiences as a lad of about twelve living in a smallish midwestern city, a year or two before the turn of the century. I was gazing enraptured at the pageantry of the Civil War as it unfolded in the magazines of that period. During the week in which I record the happenings and impressions which I have gathered for the present installment, explosions have rocked several of the worlds in which I was beginning to develop an interest back then, an interest which led to deep involvement in later years.

The Russians, Communists to boot, have beaten the United States in the very realm where Americans were smugly convinced that nobody could teach them anything. They have launched a satellite, their sputnik, into outer space. In so doing they have demonstrated that they are ahead of the United States in at least one crucial aspect of military technology. Furthermore, whatever the relationships of power may be, it is clear that the whole world has been catapulted into the era of "push button warfare", *i. e.* of ultimate insecurity.

In another field what is happening in Little Rock is a startling reminder that the Civil War is not something safely contained in the past. The mask has been torn from the deep seated racial fears and prejudices which afflict many people in all sections of the country. In the confusion and anguish of the moment, people in

Little Rock were called to prayer. There were those who prayed to the God of Law and Order that quiet might prevail and the decrees of the Supreme Court be carried out. There was apparently no clear call to prayer to the God who brought his people out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage and warned: "Thou shalt have no other God before me." No prayer, that is, that the moral sickness and shame of prejudice and segregation might be cut out of our hearts.

In still another field, the press reported on the convention of one of the largest and most powerful unions in the country—the teamsters'. The city authorities of Miami, a Florida resort which has become a favorite location for labor union conventions at which the spokesmen of the proletariat gather, openly suspended their policy of keeping well known gangsters out of the city for the duration of the convention. When the convention was over and their union duties performed, by electing James Hoffa to succeed David Beck as union president, the gangsters were given thirty-six hours to clear out.

The contrast between the world of six decades ago, which seemed "to lie before us so various, so beautiful, so new", and today's world is in many ways so vast that one questions whether there is any comprehensible relationship between the two and whether any attempt to articulate a relationship can lead to anything but frustration. Moreover, today's world, not least in America,



is sick and in some danger of cracking apart. What does the life of the individual and the attempt to reflect upon it mean in this context? A friend passing through an emotional crisis writes: "I begin this on the day the man-made moon is launched, and I have just heard its beep on the radio. I am staggered by the gap which exists between our scientific and our self-knowledge,—almost to the point of thinking we might as well sweep our little problem under the rug and forget it: what does it matter!"

The qualifying adverb is there, however: "almost" but not quite at the point of thinking that the attempt at understanding and communication does not matter. I am indeed persuaded that it would be enlightening and salutary for Americans today to contemplate America's image of itself at the turn of the century and immediately thereafter. I shall attempt to delineate that image, and provide glimpses of myself, on whose mind that image was imprinted.

### The Little Boy Who Told the Truth

I surmise that in the life of every child there are incidents which reveal a deep seated behavior pattern: in a crucial and unanticipated moment the child does what he does without having had time or often even the inclination to reflect and plan, because this is the way he is made. With minor alterations, this is the way he will find he always has to behave.

Such an incident occurred when I was eleven and in the seventh grade in public school. One afternoon, the big boy in the class, who was also something of a bully, was called to the front by the teacher to be reprimanded for some shenanigan. His seat was in the back row. As he passed my seat near the front, I surreptitiously stuck out my foot. He stumbled over it and barely avoided landing in a heap at the teacher's feet. She had not seen my foot sticking out and would not have easily suspected me of being a foot-sticker-outer. She assumed that what had occurred was some more "monkey business" on the part of the other boy—evidence of his lack of respect for the dignity and authority of teachers—and so he got a double reprimand.

The other children sensed what had really happened and were consequently aware that there would be excitement when school let out. My recollection is that we did not pay much attention to the arithmetic or whatever it was we were supposed to be doing the rest of the time. When closing time came we marched out, probably with more than the usual angelic innocence written on our faces. One of the teachers stood on the front porch of the frame school house and watched us go down the sidewalk until we got beyond a high solid fence which hid us from her sight.

I stopped there and so did several other boys. In a moment the big boy arrived, and as he faced me his

pals gathered round. For some unfathomable reason I no longer felt afraid or nervous, as I had up to that moment. He said in a belligerent tone: "You tripped me." I looked him in the eye and quietly said: "Yes, I did." I suppose this development was unexpected to him. He had probably felt I would try to lie out of it, or possibly put up my fists and make the best fight of it that I could. The response I did make took him off his guard. He hesitated, shifted his weight to the other leg, hitched one of his shoulders, then turned and walked away without saying a word. His pals followed him. In a moment the other boys walked off, considerably disappointed.

I have no recollection of what my own thoughts were as I walked home. It was not until twenty years or so later that the incident came back to me for the first time. The fact that thereafter I did at intervals recall it indicates that it had made a considerable impression. It was not, however, until about 1940—that is, about forty years after the occurrence—that it came home to me that it illustrated several aspects of the pacifist philosophy which I had consciously adopted in 1915 but toward which I had no doubt had an inclination many years earlier.

In amplifying this observation, let me speak in the third person of the little boy in the incident, which has always seemed to me to represent something that happened to me and through me, rather than something which I did deliberately and, as it were, by my own effort. In the first place, the little boy did the unexpected thing. The conventional action in such a situation is that of fight or flight. And the opponent knows by habit or instinct how to respond. When he encounters an unexpected reaction, it is as if an act of what Richard Gregg called "moral jiu-jitsu" has been performed upon him.

In any pacifism which is not cowardice or at best mere passivity there must be this factor of spontaneity and imagination. One of the chief marks of our fallen condition is that in a world where no two human beings are exactly alike, we usually behave like figures in a drill. This is true of nations and is one of the basic causes of war. Nation No. 1 gets itself a gun or an atomic bomb, not, of course to do any harm to any one; it is just a matter of security. But the nation at which the gun happens to be pointed feels uneasy and gets itself a gun. Then nation No. 1 feels utterly defenseless again, of course, and must have another gun, and so it goes. It still does when the weapon is I. C. B. M. Well did W. H. Auden pray: "Prohibit sharply the rehearsed response."

Secondly, the Little Boy told the truth. This is also a very revolutionary thing to do. Incidentally, I am not making claims about knowing the truth or being immune from self-deceit. I am speaking only of a dis-

position to tell the truth as one sees it in a situation of tension and conflict. It is unusual even in face-to-face relationships. It is not expected at all between nations, in politics or in business. You "give them a sales talk." Yet everyone has experienced what a cleanliness and a healing comes into a situation when nobody is trying to hide anything any more, when the cards are on the table, when what people think privately or will tell to another individual, they also say in the market place or if need be cry from the housetop. I am thinking of what many Southerners will say, for private consumption only, about race; or nuclear scientists about war.

Thirdly, the Little Boy admitted that he was in the wrong. Maybe he should have said it to the teacher in school. However that may be, when the battle was impending, he admitted that he had done the deed. This isn't often done, even in good society. And who ever expects a nation to admit that it is in the wrong? Lord knows what would happen if either Eisenhower or Khrushchev confessed guilt. Yet Jesus held there was no sin like that of thinking one is not a sinner as other men are, no crime like arrogating moral superiority over other men to oneself. And have we not all experienced what a delightful coolness and deep healing comes into a situation when no one is trying to justify himself any more?

Fourthly, the Little Boy in the incident was not afraid. Leave aside the very important question as to how this came about. For the present purpose we deal with the fact. The fact is that he who is afraid, under tension, creates tension in others, makes them afraid. The fact is that men think they must create a world in which they will be what they call secure, *i. e.* in which there will be nothing to be afraid of. The fact is, also, that there is no such world; the universe is not built like that. Fear never built anything. You have to begin by not being afraid and then you will have the equipment with which to remove the things that are to be feared.

Finally, the Little Boy, having as it were rendered himself defenseless, miraculously found himself safe. Spiritual forces are as real as physical or military. In a way all men know this and at times act upon the knowledge. The trouble is mainly that we want to have both. We want to trust in God and have plenty of H-bombs too, just in case. The fact is, we can't have it both ways. We have to choose on what level, with what weapons, we shall wage the battle, and accept the risks and consequences involved. There are risks either way.

These, then, are some of the things I learned in the course of the years. But they were probably a part of me before my mind apprehended them.

### The Labor Prize Essay

One other incident in my grade school days points to a later interest, that in the labor movement. In the year

that I was in the eighth grade the Trades and Labor Council of Grand Rapids, Michigan, instituted an essay competition for children in the city's grade schools. The subject was Child Labor. The prize was \$15 worth of books and publication of the prize essay in the souvenir book issued by the Council on Labor Day. The principle of the North Ionia Street School, Miss Amanda Stout, whose name went well with her figure and who was a pleasant and noble lady, called me into her office one day, told me I should go into the contest, and expressed the opinion that I'd win if I did. The ideas of writing, of winning, and of books to own, were all delightful. In any case, a boy brought up as I had been had no alternative but to enter the contest, once the principal had proposed it.

I have no idea even now as to what children of twelve or thirteen are supposed to know about child labor—I mean as a subject to write about. Certainly I had practically no idea then. Miss Stout placed in my hands some information about the subject, provided by the Trades and Labor Council. Writing about a subject I could hardly be expected to know much about did not seem too formidable an undertaking to me. After all, by that time, instead of committing somebody's Christmas poem to memory and reciting it at the Sunday School Christmas Festival, I was writing and delivering my own sermonettes on such themes as: "Christ as Prophet, Priest and King." So I wrote a moral essay on Child Labor and handed it to Miss Stout. Some weeks later, the matter had gone out of my mind, chiefly because I was full of excitement about going away from home soon, to the Hope College Preparatory School in the town of Holland, twenty-five miles away, to prepare for the ministry, a goal which was eleven years distant—four years of prep school, four of college and three of theological seminary intervening—but which was predestined and therefore in a sense already realized. However, one summer day, the announcement came through Mrs. Morley, whom I mentioned in the previous installment, that I had won the prize.

Some days later, she and a representative of the Trades and Labor Council took me to the big bookstore downtown to help me select the books, that is, to pick them out for me. The packages which I carried home included *Self Help* by Samuel Smiles, the standard work of that time for teaching people how to succeed, *i. e.* make money, by frugality, sobriety and industry. I read it. I have never been drunk. I am, I suppose, industrious—but from preference, not from a sense of duty. My tastes are simple, but I have a considerable aversion to saving and a strong aversion to money making.

My prize collection also included Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*, a novel I was never able to read, and Scott's *Ivanhoe*, which I did read a good many years later and liked. But there were also real prizes. One was an an-



thology of poems by Agnes Repplier, which helped develop a love for poetry, which has been one of life's greatest and most enduring joys. A second was J. B. Green's *Short History of England*, which opened up another field, which I have cultivated vigorously through the years and which sometimes tempted me in my youth to desert the ministry and go in for teaching history. Finally, there was a volume of Emerson's *Essays*, which was, I am sure, the most seminal influence of all on my thinking. With Lincoln, Emerson was a creator of that "American Dream", which along with the great passages

of the Hebrew-Christian Scriptures molded and nourished my mind and spirit.

Thus I come to the other concern expressed at the beginning of this installment: the attempt to delineate the image of America, the "myth" which was communicated to Americans in those years before World War I. The attempt, it might be called, to convey what America *felt* like in those days. I have touched upon this earlier in my reference to my introduction to Abraham Lincoln, but now we must be more explicit. This is, however, matter for the next chapter.

(To be continued in next issue)

## LAWRENCE LIPTON CONFESSES :

### "I Was a Poet for the F. B. I."

Murder, suicide, mayhem. Wow! The stories I could tell. See my agent. Even before God was insulted at Yale I was at the U of I picking up spondees and trochees in the Co-op and counting the condoms in the boneyard on Monday morning.

I was Ed Hoover's man at YMCA College collecting free verse in the ladies' room and once, disguised as Oscar Wilde, in the men's toilet. Cash McCall is my co-pilot.

At the Green Mask, in the very shadow of the Tribune Tower—may I speak freely? the beard of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was burned in ritual orgy, hair by hair.

In Chicago I joined the Escalator Movement under the name of Gertrude Stein and nobody suspected anything. From a poet named Rexroth I learned about six different kinds of sex, all of them subversive.

In dives on Rush Street we lay on divans in mixed company and talked about modern art, waited on by naked African pygmies. We sat on the floor and read Edna St. Vincent Millay, aloud. I could name names and places.

On orders from Ezra Pound I infiltrated the *Saturday Evening Post* and planted excerpts from Edgar A. Guest. One night I broke into the *Saturday Review* and lopped off Literature from the masthead. Nobody noticed it.

Four times I escaped from behind curtains—iron, bamboo, dimity and shower, and once I barely made it by way of a bedroom fire escape clad only in pajama tops. Danger is my business.

I found an atheist in a foxhole and reported him to General MacArthur. Twice I was shot down in missions over Union Square, Waldorf Cafeteria, Camp Nitgedieget and the League of American Penwomen. Arthur Godfrey is my co-pilot.

I joined the Brownian Movement before it split with the Fourth Dimensheviks. Big Jim Oppenheimer was its Party boss. I would tell you about my affair with Tillie Zilch but that's still classified.

I was there when they dubbed the Communist Manifesto into the movie of *Charley's Aunt*, and nipped the conspiracy to smuggle quotations from Karl Marx into the popcorn bags. Now they're plotting to foul up the rhymes in the singing commercials.

Ten grand buys my tale of horror at the Cotton Club when Louis Armstrong sang *Eli Eli* on secret orders from the Elders of Zion, and the borshtcapades in the Holland Tunnel with Mickey Katz on Walpurgisnacht. Commander Whitehead is my co-pilot.

For an extra grand I'll tell all I know about free verse, free love, free lunch, free wheeling and free pop at barbecues of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Dadaist front controlled by Tristan Tzara and Ogden Nash.

Now, back in the free world, with my unexpurgated copy of Anne Morrow Lindbergh's *The Unicorn* and the complete files of the Soviet Ministry of Culture I am Poet in Residence at *Time*, *Life* and *Fortune*. Zsa Zsa Gabor is my co-pilot.



## American Frescoes 7:

# A Cake of Soap for La Siesta

WALLACE HAMILTON



I HIT the outskirts of the California town about one in the morning. It was raining, and the signs of the motels flashed, pinwheeled, and pistoned on the deserted pavement. The Acacia's blue neon claimed a heated pool. A geyser of orange said the Rancho had king-sized beds. I dodged past an eight-foot figure twirling a lasso of yellow lights; decided against Rosarito (\$2.50 per bed); and settled for La Siesta, AAA-approved, TV in every room, and right next to a shopping center that looked like an easy source of morning coffee.

The motel room was pleasant enough. The bed frame had been seared with branding irons, but the mattresses were comfortable. The closet was big, the bathroom clean, and against one wall was the darkened eye of the television set. Two pictures of English hunting scenes hung on the wall. The bedside lamp was black ceramic with a rawhide shade.

I was tired. Tomorrow morning would be time enough for showering. I set the alarm and went to bed.

The next morning I groped into the bathroom with my toilet kit for a shower and shave. There was no soap on the sink. There was no soap in the shower. There was no soap in the sink cabinet. Five dollars a night. But no soap. I rummaged through the kit. Still no soap.

The management should have saved

money by leaving out one of those hunting prints on the wall, using the savings to provide their customers with soap. That rawhide shade had probably cost two years supply.

Unshowered and bearded, I got dressed slowly because I was preoccupied with some mathematics. Figuring that the television set had cost the management a hundred and fifty dollars, that a cake of hotel soap cost a penny a piece, and that a given room might be occupied four nights a week, I was trying to compute how many soapless occupancies had gone into that television set. With two pieces of soap per occupancy, that was eight cents a week times fifty-two weeks—four dollars and some cents a year. By the time I was dressed, I'd found out that it was going to take over thirty-seven years of no soap to pay for the television set. Plus interest.

The manager wasn't in. The maid was hiding behind a wheel truck piled with sheets at the other end of the motel a block and a half away. I stalked over to the shopping center to buy a cake of soap. A large cake of soap. A cake of soap that I would leave on the sink when I checked out, as a reminder to the management about fundamentals.

The first store in the shopping center acreage was a drug store. It said so on a pylon about sixty feet high.

Walking past four lines of parked cars, I came to the sidewalk. The piped music finished up *Deep Purple* and started something that sounded like the *William Tell Overture* in waltz time. A photoelectric cell opened the door for me and I was inside.

The place was built on the general proportions of a blimp hangar, and the display counters stretched from one end to the other. After an outer lobby of 25c books, liquor, and LP records of Perry Como, the drugstore proper began at the other side of a turnstile with a display of fishing poles, landing nets, and little jars of something that looked like some particularly potent medication but turned out to be salmon eggs.

The display counters were about twenty feet long and set up supermarket style. On the other side of the fishing pole aisle was the stationery section with tray tables, swords for shish kebab, and a barbecue for \$12.98.

I thought of asking someone where to find a cake of soap, but the nearest clerk was at the check-out counter up by the cold beer section. It seemed like quite a hike; I kept going.

The next counter was encouraging. Kleenex and variations. Twenty display feet of Kleenex and variations. And on the other side, twelve feet of

mineral oil. But the promise of a cake of soap soon faded with a special display of baby strollers and on into the kitchenware section.

It was getting to be sort of a challenge. I detoured feminine hygiene, and landed in the toy section. Beyond was a straight twenty feet of toothpaste. I wondered what would happen if I fired the 69c Atomic Ray Gun at all that toothpaste. No one was looking. Nobody was anywhere around. I took careful aim, and pulled the trigger. There was a terrible noise, a sort of grinding whine that momentarily drowned out Ponchinelli's *Dance of the Hours*, which was coming over the loud-



speaker system. Nothing happened to the toothpaste, at least nothing visible. I was pretty sure, however, that I had blasted the irium into sub-atomic particles, and that the effects would show up genetically in the third or fourth generation. I put the atomic gun back and left the neighborhood.

Prowling down a twenty foot stretch of laxatives I tried to remember who had done all that fulminating about "general gluts." Not Ricardo. Smith, maybe. Or Malthus, and Ricardo had proved him wrong. That was it. A nice phrase, though. "General glut". A fine eighteenth century ring to it.

I stopped at the cross aisle, and reasoned carefully. The place to get soap, when all else failed, was the cosmetic counter. It might be hyacinth bubble bath or Yardley's Lavender, but at least it would be soap. I turned left on the cross aisle and headed with resolution

toward the mauve and crystal of the cosmetic counter which ran the full length of the store against one wall.

I was preparing myself psychologically for the purchase as I passed by the encyclopedia display. "Do you have something in the way of soap?" sounded too hesitant. There had to be a forthright virility to the first inquiry, perhaps a flat "Yardley's Lavender soap, please," to forestall any possible sale of toilet water, foundation cream, or hand lotion. A simple question, not gruff, exactly, but to the point, leaving no room for quibbling.

Beyond the encyclopedia were baby bottles; at the end of the baby bottle counter was a display stand of yellow translucent plastic. The sign above the stand announced SHAM-PLASTIFOAM—the new, new, NEW SHAMPOO in the big blue bottle. Try a bottle, today, FREE, with each twenty-five cent bar of the finest cake detergent!

Below the sign, the two articles were packaged together in neat rows. A large bar of detergent, brightly wrapped, and a blue bottle. Twenty-five cents was a lot of money to pay; on the other hand, it was less than three cakes of Yardley's Lavender. I took a package of the detergent and the bottle off the stand, and headed back through the Kleenex, the fishing poles, and the stationery.

The girl at the check out stand was adamant; it didn't matter if I just wanted the soap. The shampoo came with the detergent, and it was all twenty-five cents plus tax. I asked her if she'd ever used the shampoo. She said no and took the money.

Back at the motel room, I examined the blue bottle. Shamplasti-foam, it said on the label, was not just a new shampoo, but an entirely new dimension in the restorative care of the scalp and hair. It was an achievement of modern chemistry that would bring new lustre to each strand. It was to be applied after

dampening the hair with warm water, and to be rinsed out with hot water, after a thorough massage.

Well, I'd paid for it; it wouldn't fit in an already overcrowded bag; so I took the blue bottle along with the cake of detergent into the shower.

It made a lot of foam, all right; a thick, almost palpable foam with an occasional large translucent bubble. The detergent was good, too, —a good suds and a good smell.

Of course, it would have been a lot more convenient if there had been the usual cake of soap in the motel rooms at La Siesta. But if the national economy kept on in the same old rut, with the same old cake of soap in the same old motel room, there would be no room for improvement, for new developments, better products. It wasn't a matter of general glut, I decided, but Progress. My twenty-five cents had helped pay the chemist to launch a better product. An ordinary cake of soap might have been all right for an ordinary shampoo, but this was not just a shampoo, it was an achievement of modern chemistry.

But like a good many products of modern chemistry, Shamplasti-foam turned out to be a little mysterious. It didn't rinse out.

I tried hot water, and the foam billowed. I tried warm water, and the bubbles grew bigger and settled on the floor of the shower stall like so many basketballs. In the spirit of scientific experiment, I braced against the faucet handle, and turned the cold on full force. The effect was strange. Vision grew hazy, and I could no longer feel the force of the shower; just a roaring in my ears. I tried to reach the faucet again and couldn't find it. The bar of detergent and the washcloth had disappeared, and all I could touch was a yielding plastic surface. Modern chemistry plus cold water, it appeared, had created one large plastic bubble—and I was inside it.

Just what happened after that is



a little vague. The bubble was translucent and I could see only the outlines of light and shadow. I managed to get out of the shower stall, and tried to remember if there was any sharp surface around in the room that could be used to rip the bubble open. Bumping against something that seemed to be a dresser, I found the corner, and pushed the plastic against it, but the surface held. The bed post was no more successful. There were scissors in the toilet kit, but no way to get at them.

A key rattled in the outside lock and I heard the door open. There was

a loud squawk. Then a woman's voice gave out with a stream of Italian in which the Holy Family figured prominently.

"Madam," I said firmly.

More Italian, apparently an invocation.

"Madam," I repeated and the voice sounded thunderous inside the bubble. "Have you got a pair of scissors?"

The woman's voice sounded nearer, and I saw the surface of the bubble push in momentarily.

"Or a knife?" I asked.

"You inside?" she asked.

"Yes. I am inside."

More Italian. Then: "You wait there."

"A good suggestion," I said as the door slammed shut.

She was back in a few moments; there was a sound of ripping and escaping air; the bubble deflated; and I caught the plastic as it started to slip to the ground, and wrapped it around me. The maid, an ample darkhaired woman, stared at me and muttered something about Lazarus.

"Madam", I said wearily. (And I was very tired.) "Madam, all I want is a cake of soap. Just plain soap."

## Coercion in American Life

(Continued from page 12)

the growing willingness of the federal government to use coercion to further its will and opinions. The increase in the number of cases since Lincoln called for troops to suppress the rebellion after the Confederates fired on Fort Sumter illustrates, as well, the effect of the Civil War on the once-important problem of federal-state relations. There was a time when the states of the United States performed substantive functions. The states determined economic policies for their citizens—built canals, roads, and railroads; chartered and controlled banks; and developed natural resources, including land. In Jeffersonian thinking the state governments, being closer to the people, were the reasonable safeguards of liberties against the aggressive tendencies of the distant government in Washington. But after the Civil War, and after the close of the Reconstruction period, the states had lost their primary economic functions, and their political power had become meaningless. Since reconstruction, the states have had no rights which the federal government was bound to respect. The "invasion of Arkansas", despite Governor Faubus and the anguished cries of David Lawrence, was accomplished decades ago and not just a few weeks past in Little Rock.

Naturally each "invasion" has been accompanied by protestations of the highest moral purposes. The maintenance of law and the preservation of order, the opposition to treason, the desire to preserve domestic peace, the advancement of liberty, freedom, and equality have each served as rationalization for the exercise of national power. But the repeated situations have brought into focus the problems of the rights of citizens in a democracy—including the right to make a mistake. Democracy is—as the political pundits never bother to

point out—essentially government by unanimity: that is, we are all unanimously agreed to abide by the decisions of the majority. But the majority has an obligation not to exercise tyranny over the minority. Traditionally in the American process, the majorities have attempted by conciliation, compromise, and concession to secure the consent of the minority. When the majority resorts to coercive measures, it is no longer operating within the framework and the concepts of a democratic system. The increased willingness of those in power in the national government to resort to military coercion of the citizens demonstrates that individuals, like states, have no rights which the government is bound to respect.

There is one element in all of the historical precedents which might be overlooked. In each of the cases where the federal might has been used to establish right, there was a peaceful, nonviolent alternative open. The whiskey rebels could have been persuaded—as indeed they finally were—to pay their taxes, even though it meant the destruction of a household industry and eventually benefited the great distillers. Jackson's threat to use troops in the nullification controversy was avoided by a compromise settlement. Lincoln might have allowed the Confederacy to collapse of its own weight, as he had every reason to believe that it would have done. The alternative before Cleveland and Wilson in the cases where they interfered in strikes was to have stayed out. And even in the Little Rock crisis, there was an alternative. The American Civil Liberties Union proposed that the President go to Little Rock and make a personal appeal to the rioters. The acceptance of the suggestion would have made little demand on personal courage, but would have required imagination. The President, however, preferred to furnish another incident, following precedent, in the growing record of the use of coercion in American life.



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